

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BRASILIA 3891

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EXDIS

LA PAZ FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y - (TEXT PARA 2 LINE 6; PARA 5)

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR BR
SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER SILVEIRA'S COMMENTS ON FUTURE OF MEMORAN-
RANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

1. AT OUTSET OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY TODMAN'S ONE AND HALF
HOUR CONVERSATION WITH SILVEIRA MAY 13, TODMAN CONVEYED
TO HIM SECRETARY VANCE'S PERSONAL GREETINGS, EXPRESSING HOPE
THAT SECRETARY AND SILVEIRA WOULD BE ABLE TO MEET AT CIEC IN
PARIS AND REITERATING SECRETARY'S DESIRE TO FIX DATE FOR VISIT
TO BRAZIL IN THE NEAR FUTURE. SILVEIRA REPLIED THAT IF HE WENT TO
CIEC HE WOULD WELCOME OPPORTUNITY TO MEET SECRETARY AND STATED ONCE
AGAIN THAT SECRETARY WOULD BE WELCOME TO VISIT BRAZIL AT ANY TIME.

2. IN THIS CONTEXT TODMAN REAFFIRMED IMPORTANCE SECRETARY
ATTRIBUTES TO CONSULTATIONS WITH BRAZIL AND OUR HOPE THAT
THEY WILL CONTINUE AT ALL LEVELS. IN RESPONSE. SILVEIRA INQUIRED
BLUNTLY WHETHER MOU HE SIGNED WITH KISSINGER STANDS OR NOT,
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 BRASIL 03891 142347Z

SINCE IT ONLY HAS VALUE IF IT IS INTENDED TO BE USED. HE
ADDED THAT HE AND KISSINGER, IN AGREEING TO IT, HAD WANTED TO
AVOID "ACCIDENTS OF THE ROAD". MOU WAS USEFUL BECAUSE VOLUME
OF US-BRAZIL RELATIONS IS LARGE, AS IS NUMBER OF POTENTIAL
PROBLEMS IN SUCH A RELATIONSHIP. SILVEIRA COMMENTED THAT HE
HAD CONSIDERED RAISING THE QUESTIONS OF THE MOU DIRECTLY IN HIS
CORRESPONDENCE WITH SECRETARY VANCE BUT HAD DECIDED AGAINST IT. NOW

HE SAID, HE HAD TO PUT THE QUESTION FRANKLY SINCE PRESS WAS SURE TO RAISE IT WITH TODMAN IN ANY EVENT. HE ASKED WHETHER THERE WAS SOME PREJUDICE BECAUSE OF THE FACT THAT THE MOU HAD BEEN SIGNED BY KISSINGER.

3. TODMAN REPEATED US INTEREST IN CONSULTATIONS, NOTING IN PASSING THAT TRADE REPRESENTATIVE STRAUSS MIGHT VISIT AND AFFIRMING US INTEREST IN RECONVENING TRADE SUB-GROUP SOON. NOTING THAT HE COULD NOT GIVE DEFINITIVE ANSWER TO SILVEIRA'S QUESTION AT THIS MOMENT, HE CAUTIONED AGAINST FOCUSSING TOO MUCH ON FORM OR LABELS IN OUR CONSULTATIONS TO THE NEGLECT OF SUBSTANCE.

4. SILVEIRA COUNTERED THAT THAT WAS NOT HIS INTERPRETATION. HE SAID THAT IF SUB-GROUPS ARE TO WORK THEY MUST BE UNDER THE MOU -- "OTHERWISE THEY ARE GHOSTS." HE WAS AWARE THAT THERE WAS SOME "EMOTIONAL RESENTMENT" IN THE US AGAINST THE MOU, ADDING AS AN ASIDE THAT SIMILAR MOU WITH UK. MODELED AFTER US-BRAZILIAN MOU, WAS WORKING WELL, WITH REGULAR SESSIONS PRECEDED BY JOINT STAFF MEETINGS FOR PLANNING AND PREPARATION. CONSIDERING POSSIBILITY THAT US RESENTMENT TOWARD MOU MIGHT BE WANING, SILVEIRA WONDERED WHETHER IT MIGHT BE EVOLVING FROM "DISGRACE TO HAPPINESS." BUT HE STRESSED THAT MOU IS NOT A TREATY AND THE PARTIES HAVE EVERY RIGHT TO SAY THEY DO NOT WANT TO WORK UNDER IT ANY LONGER. BUT IT WAS HIS FRANK VIEW THAT THIS WOULD BE THE FIRST TIME IN HISTORY FOR THE US TO WITHDRAW FROM SUCH AN AGREEMENT.

5. SILVEIRA CONTINUED BY SAYING THAT THE PRESS CONTINUES TO FEED ON THE QUESTION OF THE FUTURE OF THE MOU. RECALLING HIS CONCERN OVER THE MOU'S HAVING BECOME AN ISSUE IN THE US CAMPAIGN,
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PAGE 03 BRASIL 03891 142347Z

SILVEIRA CLAIMED THAT HE HAD EVEN DECIDED NOT TO SHOW THE PRESIDENT THE REPORTS FROM THE US ON WHAT WAS BEING SAID AT THAT TIME.

6. TODMAN REAFFIRMED IMPORTANCE TO US OF CONSULTATIVE PROCESS AND RESULTS ACHIEVED. HE SAID HE BELIEVED THAT ALL THIS SHOULD CONTINUE TO TAKE PLACE WHILE IT IS DECIDED HOW PROCESS SHALL BE NAMED. SILVEIRA CONCLUDED HIS TREATMENT OF MOU QUESTION BY RECALLING THAT HE HAD "TRUSTED" KISSINGER AND HAD CONSIDERED MOU A USEFUL AND IMPORTANT STEP. HE COMMENDED KISSINGER FOR ALL THAT HE HAD DONE FOR US-BRAZIL RELATIONSHIP AND MADE POINT THAT WHILE HIS DIALOGUE WITH KISSINGER HAD BEEN EASY AND OPEN, IT HAD ALWAYS BEEN SERIOUS AND NEVER "STRICTLY PERSONAL." AS AGENDAS HAD ALWAYS BEEN PREPARED AND NOTES WERE REGULARLY TAKEN.

7. THE QUESTION OF THE MOU'S CURRENT STATUS WAS A PROMINENT THEME IN JOURNALISTS' QUESTIONS DURING TODMAN'S PRESS CONFERENCE. THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY'S REPLIES, STRESSING OUR GREAT INTEREST IN CONSULTATIONS, WERE NON-COMMITTAL ON MOU.

8. COMMENT. AS WE EXPECTED, SILVEIRA, WHO IS CLOSELY IDENTIFIED PERSONALLY WITH MOU, CONSIDERS CLARIFICATION OF ITS FUTURE PIVOTAL ISSUE IN DETERMINING SCOPE AND TONE OF HIS WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH NEW ADMINISTRATION. WE HAVE NO REASON TO BELIEVE HE WILL CEASE PRESSING FOR AN ANSWER ON THIS POINT. ASSISTANT SECRETARY BELIEVES, AND I CONCUR FULLY, THAT QUESTION OF FUTURE STATUS OF MOU REQUIRES A PROMPT DECISION, BY ALL MEANS BEFORE VISIT OF MRS. CARTER TO BRAZIL JUNE 6.
CRIMMINS

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